

REMARKS

Claims 10-15 and 17-20 were previously cancelled without prejudice. Claims 1-9 and 16 remain pending in the application. Re-examination and reconsideration of the application in view of the following remarks are requested.

Claims 1, 2 and 4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Parker (USP 5,356,319) in view of Jepson (USP 3,003,300). This rejection is respectfully traversed, because claims 1, 2 and 4 recite a watercraft apparatus having feature that are neither described nor suggested by the cited references.

In particular, claim 1 recites a “watercraft apparatus comprising, a hull; a jet pump; an engine supported within the hull, the engine having a crankshaft and at least one camshaft, each camshaft being driven at a reduced speed relative to the crankshaft;” and “a coupling structure operatively coupling the jet pump to the at least one camshaft to drive the jet pump at the reduced speed of the camshaft, the jet pump supported for providing drive power to drive the hull on water.” None of the prior art of record describes or suggests a watercraft apparatus having such a combination of features.

None of the cited references disclose or suggest a coupling structure operatively coupling a jet pump of a watercraft apparatus to at least one camshaft to drive the jet pump at a reduced speed, where the jet pump is supported to provide drive power to drive a hull of the watercraft apparatus on water. This combination of features is neither disclosed nor suggested by Parker or Jepson.

The Examiner acknowledges that Parker does not disclose coupling a drive shaft to the camshaft at one half speed reduction (Office Action, paragraph 2). Accordingly, the Examiner cited Jepson as disclosing a drive shaft 36 coupled to a camshaft 102 at one half speed reduction (citing col. 8, ll. 65-75 and col. 9, ll. 1-30 of Jepson). The Examiner stated “[i]t would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to form the engine of Parker with a camshaft coupled at half speed of the crankshaft to the jet drive as taught by Jepson for a very simple drive without complicated reduction gearing.”

The combination of Parker and Jepson suggested by the Examiner is respectfully traversed. Neither Parker nor Jepson would have suggested forming the engine of Parker with a camshaft coupled to jet drive of a watercraft. Parker describes a boat with a removable inboard jet propulsion unit that is removably received within a well in the hull. Parker describes the jet propulsion unit as “an integral jet power unit 1 [that] includes an internal combustion engine 2

driving a shaft 3 which drives a water impeller 4.” (Parker, col. 2, ll. 16-18.) No further details are provided regarding how Parker’s engine 2 couples to a water impeller 4. Thus, by not proposing any new mechanism for coupling the engine 2 to the water impeller 4, Parker would have suggested conventional coupling arrangements to one of ordinary skill in the art (e.g., connecting the water impeller to the crankshaft of the engine, e.g., shaft 3). Parker neither describes nor suggests a coupling structure operatively coupling a camshaft of an engine to a jet pump of a watercraft.

Jepson describes a lawnmower that has an engine 96 coupled to drive two different drivable portions of the mower: (1) the wheels and (2) a lawn cutting blade or reel. Jepson refers to prior lawnmowers that used an engine having a crankshaft (prime mover) connected to drive both the wheels and the cutting blade or reel. Jepson states that such prior arrangements required complicated clutching means for clutching the prime mover to both the ground wheels and the grass cutting means. (Jepson, col. 2, ll. 6-12.) Jepson purports to simplify prior designs by connecting the crankshaft of an engine to drive the wheels of a lawnmower and connecting the camshaft 102 of the engine to drive a cutting reel 35 of the lawnmower. Thus, Jepson teaches to employ the crankshaft and the camshaft to drive two different drivable portions (wheels and cutting blade or reel, respectively) of the lawnmower, where both drivable portions were previously driven from the same crankshaft.

Jepson’s purpose of simplifying designs of lawnmowers that power both wheels and cutting blades or reels would not apply to jet powered watercraft, as described by Parker. There are no corresponding two different drivable portions in Parker’s watercraft that would benefit from employing two separate drive power from both the crankshaft and the camshaft, as taught by Jepson. It is important to note that Jepson teaches to use the engine’s camshaft and the crankshaft, and continues to use the engine crankshaft to provide the prime motive for mobilizing the lawnmower.

Jepson teaches to power the wheels of the lawnmower through the crankshaft. The power to the wheels is what provides the drive for mobilizing the mower. Thus, Jepson continues the conventional thought of connecting the crankshaft to the component that provides mobility. Jepson would not have taught one of ordinary skill in the art to connect the camshaft to the component that provides mobility to any vehicle. In this regard, Jepson would not have suggested to connect a camshaft to power a jet drive of a jet powered watercraft.

Jepson teaches of connecting a cutting reel of the lawnmower to the camshaft (as compared to prior art connections of cutting reels to the crankshaft). Such a teaching would not apply to Parker's watercraft, because Parker's watercraft does not have a cutting reel.

Furthermore, Jepson teaches that complicated reduction and reversal gearing was previously needed to connect the crankshaft to a lawnmower cutting blade, because the cutting blade or reel runs backwards relative to the direction of rotation of the wheels, and because the cutting blade or reel should run a particular speed of rotation to provide a defined number of cuts per inch of travel of the mower over the lawn. (Jepson, col. 3, ll. 9-20 and 43-50 and col. 9, ll. 11-25.) Such a teaching would not be applicable to Parker's watercraft, because there is no need to reverse the drive direction of the engine or to control the number of cuts per inch of travel in a jet-powered watercraft.

The benefits that the Jepson patent teaches relating to driving a cutting reel from a camshaft of an engine are benefits that are specific to cutting of lawns (rotating a cutting reel in the proper direction and at a speed that provides a defined number of cuts per inch of travel) and would not be considered applicable to watercraft. There is no teaching or suggestion in Jepson or other prior art of record, of applying technology designed for rotating a cutting reel of a lawnmower to provide a defined number of cuts per inch of travel of the mower and in a reverse direction relative to mower's wheel rotation, to powering a jet drive of a jet powered watercraft.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that one skilled in the art of watercraft would not look to the Jepson patent as a manner of modifying a jet drive of the jet powered watercraft described by Parker. In that regard, the Parker and Jepson patents do not raise a prima facie case of obviousness. Accordingly, the rejection of claim 1 is respectfully traversed. Because claims 2 and 4 are dependent claims based on claim 1, those are patentable for at least the reasons above.

Claim 3 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Parker in view of Jepson as applied to claim 1 and further in view of Simner. This rejection is respectfully traversed at least for reasons as discussed above with respect to claim 1. The Simner patent neither describes nor suggests the combination of features noted above as being deficient from and not suggested by the Parker and Jepson patents. Instead, Simner was cited by the Examiner to address features relating to a retractable blade.

Claim 9 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Parker in view of Jepson as applied to claim 1 and further in view of Buzzi. This rejection is respectfully traversed at least for reasons as discussed above with respect to claim 1. The Buzzi patent neither

describes nor suggests the combination of features noted above as being deficient from and not suggested by the Parker and Jepson patents. Instead, Buzzi was cited by the Examiner to address features relating to a flanged connection.

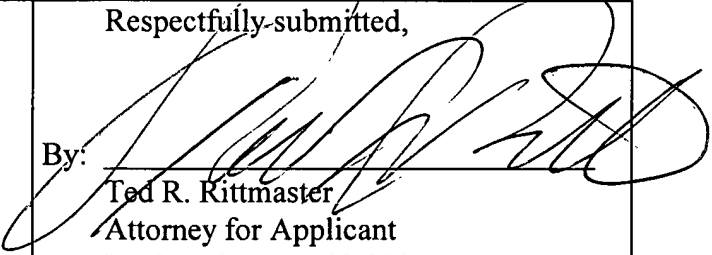
Claims 5-7 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form, including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. As it is believed that the base claim is allowable over the prior art of record (for reasons discussed above), it is respectfully submitted that claims 5-7 are presently also in condition for allowance. It is, therefore requested that the objection to those claims be withdrawn.

Applicant notes with appreciation the Examiner's indication that claims 8 and 16 are allowed. Those claims remain in the application, in their allowed form.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance. Applicant believes that the present Response is in compliance with MPEP 714.02 and 608.01(o).

The Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned by telephone at the Los Angeles telephone number (310) 975-7963, if, for any reason, the Examiner believes that the Applicant still has not fully responded to the Office Action.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 50-0872. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 50-0872. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 50-0872.

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| <p>Date: <u>October 24, 2005</u> FOLEY & LARDNER LLP Customer Number: 23392 Telephone: (310) 975-7963 Facsimile: (310) 557-8475</p> | <p>Respectfully-submitted,  By: <u>Ted R. Rittmaster</u> Attorney for Applicant Registration No. 32,933</p> |
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